

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSC-10 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 ACDA-19 IO-14 DRC-01 /111 W

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O R 060936Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO RUEHIXSECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1458

INFO CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

CINCUNC

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CHV N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 8231

EO 11652 GDS

TAG FC PFOR, MARR, KS, KN

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION OF ISLANDS PROBLEM IN COORDINATING
COMMITTEE MEETING

1. IN CONVERSATIONS WITH BLUE HOUSE SECRETARY GENERAL
KIM CHONGNDOM AND ACTING FONMIN YUN SUK HEUN. I ASKED
IF THE NAVAL PROBLEM IN THE YELLOW SEA HAD BEEN
DISCUSSED IN YESTERDAY'S MEETING OF THE COORDINATING
COMMITTEE DEPUTY CO-CHAIRMEN AT PANMUNJOM. THE
SUBSTANCE OF THEIR REPLIES IS AS FOLLOWS:

2. CHANG KI-YONG, THE SOUTH KOREAN REPRESENTATIVE,
RAISED THE PROBLEM NOT IN ITS TECHNICAL ASPECTS
BUT RATHER IN THE CONTEXT OF THE JULY 4 COMMUNIQUE.
HE SAID HIS GOVERNMENT REGARDED THE ACTIONS OF THE
NORTH KOREANS IN THE YELLOW SEA TO BE NOT CONSISTENT
WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE COMMUNIQUE, PARTICULARLY
THE AGREEMENT THAT THE TWO SIDES WOULD NOT UNDERTAKE
ARMED PROVOCATIONS AND WOULD TAKE POSITIVE STEPS TO
AVOID MILITARY INCIDENTS. CHANG SAID THAT THE NORTH
KOREAN ACTIONS CHANGING A PATTERN OF BEHAVIOR THAT
HAD EXISTED FOR OVER TWENTY YEARS RAISED GRAVE DOUBTS
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ABOUT NORTH KOREAN INTENTIONS AND TENDED TO INCREASE

TENSION.

3. NORTH KOREAN REPRESENTATIVE DID NOT MAKE DIRECT
REPLY NOR DID HE RESTATE DEMAND THAT PERMISSION WOULD
HAVE TO BE SOUGHT BEFORE SOUTH KOREAN VESSELS COULD VISIT
ISLANDS. INSTEAD HE DISMISSED ISSUE IN OFF-HAND EVASIVE
WAY. FURTHER MAC CONSIDERATION OF PROBLEM WAS NOT
MENTIONED BY EITHER SIDE.

4. COMMENT: GENERAL TONE OF MEETING HAS BEEN DESCRIBED
AS CORDIAL, AND RELATIVELY MILD NORTH KOREAN REACTION TO

THIS SPECIFIC ISSUE SUGGESTS THAT THEY DO NOT INTEND
TO FORCE A MILITARY SHOWDOWN.
UNDERHILL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, AGREEMENTS, ISLAND CLAIMS, MEETINGS, COMBAT OPERATIONS, COMMUNIQUEs, MILITARY VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 DEC 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SEOUL08231
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SEOUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731241/aaaabdrv.tel
Line Count: 77
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 NOV 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14-Nov-2001 by smithrj>; APPROVED <19-Dec-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DISCUSSION OF ISLANDS PROBLEM IN COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING
TAGS: PFOR, MARR, KS, KN
To: n/a
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005